



MONTANA DIGITAL ACADEMY

Background

The Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) was created by the Montana legislature in 2009 and began providing classes to students in September of 2010. MTDA provides two types of online classes to students anywhere in the state. The original credit portion of the program offers a comprehensive high school curriculum designed for students who have limited options at their local school and/or are interested in taking a challenging mathematics, science, English, social studies, world language or unique enriching elective course. The credit recovery component of MTDA provides offerings in mathematics, science, English and social studies courses to students at risk of not graduating from high school and in need of retrieving a credit to get back on track for graduation. The web based instructional delivery models for both original credit and credit recovery employ the services of Montana licensed public school teachers from over 30 school districts across the state. The credit recovery classes are led and facilitated by a teacher in the role of academic coach while the original credit classes use a cohort based teacher led model.

Original Credit and Credit Recovery

The data accompanying this document provides background information regarding enrollments by each school, usage by school size, achievement data and budget projections. While the term enrollment is used for both original credit and credit recovery there is a significant difference in both financial impacts on the program and the way each student works in the respective program.

Original credit, which was the first program implemented by MTDA, comprises 65% of the total enrollments and encompasses 80.5% of the total teacher cost due to its structure as a the teacher led model where the teacher is responsible for duties somewhat similar to those they experience in the brick and mortar school.

The credit recovery program began in year two of the Academy as a result of input from superintendents, principals, teachers and counselors and has a more flexible, open enrollment style of calendar. It is focused on a mastery based learning model where the teacher, in the role of academic coach, prompts and guides students in working through the content at their own pace. The academic coach monitors student progress, answers questions and grades assignments that are not graded by the online courseware. Credit recovery comprises 28% of the enrollments and encompasses 16.4% of the total teacher cost. (Note: Middle school language comprises 6% of enrollments and 3.1% of the teacher costs.)